



**United States Department of Justice
United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

Rachel K. Paulose, United States Attorney

David Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist
(612) 664-5684; cell: (612) 730-2251

News Release

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Minneapolis man sentenced on human trafficking charges

A 36-year-old Minneapolis man will spend the next 293 months in federal prison for the sex trafficking of a minor.

Federal District Court Judge David S. Doty sentenced Daniel McNeal Nov. 5 in Minneapolis. McNeal pleaded guilty May 1, 2007, to one count of the sex trafficking of a minor and one count of transporting a minor with the intent to engage in criminal sexual activity.

“The sentence imposed reflects the seriousness of the offense,” Doty stated before the court, adding that he was sentencing McNeal based on all of the relevant factors, including the age of the victim, McNeal’s criminal history, and the “grave public interest in ceasing human trafficking.”

According to court documents, McNeal admitted that in August 2006 he enticed a 16-year-old Minnesota girl into prostitution. He also admitted that in September 2006 he transported that girl from Minnesota to Iowa, and while in Iowa, engaged in sexual intercourse with her on numerous occasions. Following that trip, he transported her to Texas and South Carolina, where he caused her to work as a prostitute for his financial benefit.

McNeal, who also goes by the names of “Diamond” and “Daddy,” has a long criminal history, including assault, aggravated robbery and prostitution-related offenses. He is also recognized as a criminal sex offender in connection with a 2001 conviction in Texas for enticement to travel in interstate commerce for the purpose of prostitution. He was also charged earlier this year with failing to provide the Minnesota Sex Offender Registry with current information about himself.

According to the sentence, McNeal will serve 293 months in prison for each count, which will be served concurrently. He will also be under a lifetime supervised release after he is released from prison, and must register as a sex offender.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Erica H. MacDonald. It was the result of an investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Hennepin County Sheriff’s Office, and the Gerald D. Vick Human Trafficking Task Force. The task force

was named for the slain St. Paul police officer who dedicated his professional life to eradicating the trafficking and prostitution of people. The task force was established with federal funds and is comprised of investigators from the FBI, the U.S. Immigration and Custom Enforcement, the police departments of Minneapolis and St. Paul, the sheriff's offices of Hennepin and Ramsey county, and other agencies.

The U.S. Department of Justice reports that an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked annually across international borders for involuntary servitude or use in the sex trades. An estimated 14,500 to 17,500 are trafficked within the U.S. each year. According to the Justice Department, the Twin Cities metropolitan area is one of the 15 largest human trafficking centers in the nation.

"We agree with Judge Doty that there is a grave interest in ceasing human trafficking," said U.S. Attorney Rachel K. Paulose. "Recent studies have shown that Minnesota has been especially vulnerable to human trafficking, and we are grateful for the law enforcement partnership that we believe will bring an end to this horrific crime."